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WEST NILE VIRUS UPDATE

State health officials confirmed that four human cases have been diagnosed in a neighboring community with West Nile virus. While none of these cases were in Watertown, West Nile virus has been detected in mosquitoes in Watertown. Therefore threat levels of the nearby communities, Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Brookline, Somerville and Watertown have been raised to alert residents to the presence of the virus and the need to take precautionary measures.

Watertown Health Department has been proactively working with the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project treating catch basins with larvicide to reduce mosquito breeding grounds and urge residents to be vigilant about avoiding mosquito bites and removing stagnant water near their homes.

While most healthy people do not present with symptoms, a small percent of people infected with West Nile Virus may experience mild flu like symptoms such as fever, headaches and muscle aches. An even smaller amount of those infected with West Nile Virus, about 1%, may experience severe symptoms of West Nile Virus includes neurological symptoms from encephalitis or meningitis. *If you have symptoms and think you have been infected with West Nile Virus, visit your primary care physician.* For more information on West Nile Disease please visit the [CDC](http://www.cdc.gov) website.

What does this mean to you?

The easiest and best way to avoid West Nile virus is to prevent mosquito bites. Here are some tips:

- When outdoors, use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. Follow the directions on the package.
- Mosquitoes are most active at the end of the summer, especially during the evening and night time hours. Be sure to use insect repellent, and wear long sleeves and pants during these times or consider staying indoors during these hours.
- Make sure you have screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.

- Reduce mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from pool covers, flower pots, buckets and barrels. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths daily.